

100-142-1914

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Senator Bentsen:

Thank you for bringing to our attention
/letter regarding the situation
/who have fled from their
and are now living in Pakistan as refugees.

There are now more than one and a quarter million
Afghan refugees in Pakistan, constituting one of the
largest refugee concentrations in the world. Most of
these refugees are destitute and in need of various kinds
of assistance. The Government and people of Pakistan have
under difficult circumstances extended a hospitable and
generous helping hand to the refugees. For our part, the
Government of the United States is doing what it can to
support the international relief program complementing
the Pakistani effort. Including the commitment of about
\$33.6 million worth of basic food commodities the United
States to date pledged a total of \$42.6 million to the
UN High Commissioner for Refugees' Special Appeal for
Afghan Relief.

With respect, particularly, to the processing of
Afghan applicants for admission to the United States as
refugees, we have authorized consular officers at certain
Foreign Service posts to begin processing applicants. In
early September, however, our posts in Pakistan suspended
acceptance of new applications, pending the resolution of
existing cases and the putting into place of a better
system to cope with very heavy demand from among the
refugee population. A great difficulty we have encountered
is the need to determine from among the vast number of

The Honorable
Lloyd Bentsen,
United States Senate.

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genuine refugees, those who are eligible for admission to the United States under the Refugee Act of 1960 and then to make arrangements for orderly movement and settlement of those who qualify. /: letter will assist us in this effort with respect to

our embassy in Islamabad for their information at such time as / applies for admission to the United States.

Sincerely,

Brian Atwood
Assistant Secretary for
Congressional Relations

Inclosure.

Correspondence returned.

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